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COUNTY OF KAUAI

## **News Release**

For Immediate Release: March 30, 2005

### **Community-based process begins on vacation rental issue**

LIHU'E – In response to community concerns regarding single-family vacation rentals, a community-based process is about to begin with the first meeting to be held on Friday, April 8, from 1 to 7 p.m., at the Planning Commission meeting room in the Lihu'e Civic Center, Mo'ikeha Building, Room 2A/2B. A series of three meetings will be hosted by Mayor Bryan Baptiste, the County Planning Department and its consultant, Helber, Hastert & Fee, Planners, Inc.

The administration has been working with a group of citizens, Council members JoAnn Yukimura and Jay Furfaro, and Elizabeth Kent and Jennifer Graf of the Hawai'i State Judiciary – Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution, on the design of this process. The group of citizens include Louie Abrams, Caren Diamond, Lucy Kawaihalau, Bruce Pleas, and Barbara Robeson.

The purpose of the process is to take the complex and important issue of vacation rental of single-family dwellings and through an open, inclusive, facilitated process where learning and open-mindedness are as important as self-expression and advocacy, provide public, governmental, and vacation rental industry solution-based input. The process emphasizes respect for different viewpoints and Aloha; it is a process in which participants work together to find "What is Best for Kaua'i."

The process includes three facilitated "stakeholder" discussions. The stakeholders, from a variety of interests, have committed themselves to participate in all three discussions. The discussions will attempt to build a common information base, identify the impacts of vacation

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rentals on the community and make recommendations in a report to the Council and the Planning Department that will help to design a fair and effective law regulating vacation rentals.

The first meeting will focus on existing legal and planning framework and existing data on vacation rentals – how many are there on Kaua'i and where are they located? The first meeting will also look at the impacts, both positive and negative, on the community. Included among the presenters will be Ken Stokes of The Kauaian Institute, Ken Rainforth, Executive on Housing, Scott Ezer, County Planning consultant, and John Knox, a consultant knowledgeable about the social, cultural and environmental impacts of tourism. Public input on the impacts will also be solicited at the meeting.

At the second and third meetings, which are tentatively scheduled for May or June, the stakeholders will examine the data and input from the prior meeting and create recommendations and possible solutions. There will also be time for public input on solutions and recommendations.

While the meetings will include discussions among the stakeholders, there will be time at each meeting for public comments relating to the particular focus of each meeting. Citizens are encouraged to attend all the meetings or view them on Ho'ike to learn about the issues and share concerns and information. Written comments may be submitted at any meeting or may be sent to the facilitators at the Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution, Hawai'i State Judiciary, 417 S. King Street, Room 207, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813 or e-mailed to Elizabeth R. [Kent@courts.state.hi.us](mailto:Kent@courts.state.hi.us).

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